

*T R Barker*

# SHORT PAPERS FOR MUSLIMS.

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## DUTY OF SEARCHING FOR THE RIGHT PATH.

When suffering from a deadly disease, we are very anxious to have a skilful physician and the best medicine. A mistake may cost our lives. We all have the disease of sin, more loathsome than leprosy, more deadly than cholera. Leprosy and cholera affect only our short life on earth; sin may not only shut us out from the joys of heaven, but cast us into the place of torment. The question is, therefore, of the utmost importance, Who is the best physician for sin? What is the best medicine?

Fátiha, the first chapter of the Koran, is as follows:—

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
أَحَمَدُ اللَّهُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الرَّحِيمُ مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ  
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ  
أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرَ المَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

The following is an English translation of the above:

“In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful,  
Praise be to God, Lord of all the worlds!  
The Compassionate, the Merciful!  
King on the Day of Judgment!  
Thee do we worship, and to Thee do we cry for help!  
Guide Thou us in the right path!  
The path of those to whom Thou art gracious!  
Not of those with whom Thou art angered, nor of those who  
go astray.”

The whole of the Fátiha is excellent. It praises God for His greatness and mercy. It acknowledges Him to be the Lord of all the worlds, King of the Day of Judgment. We ought to worship Him, and cry to Him for help.

The chief prayer in the Fátiha is, “Guide Thou us in the right path; the path of those to whom Thou art gracious, not of those who go astray.” “The right path” is that which leads to heaven. The prayer shows that there are wrong paths by which we may be led astray, which lead, not to heaven, but to hell. Hence it is most important to find out the right path.

Although a man may firmly believe that he is in the right path, this does not prove that such is the case. Hindus confidently believe that by worshipping idols and bathing in the Ganges they will go to heaven. Musalmans rightly judge that Hindus are mistaken, and that they will find out their error only when it is too late. It is possible, therefore, for Musalmans as well as Hindus, to be mistaken, and it is the duty of all to examine carefully whether their way is the right way.

While it is right to pray to God to lead us in the true way, this of itself is not enough. We pray to God for our food, "Give us this day our daily bread," and it is our duty to look up to God to supply our wants. If, however, a farmer, instead of ploughing his fields and sowing seed, merely prayed to God for a harvest, could he expect to get food for himself and his family? We act like the farmer if we simply pray to God to guide us in the right path, and do not carefully examine whether our path is the right one.

Hindus, as a rule, act blindly according to custom; they follow the religion of their forefathers without enquiry. We should not behave like sheep that simply follow one another; but use the reason which God has given us, and judge for ourselves.

We are all suffering from the dreadful disease of sin; not one of the many crores of people in the world is free from it. There are two physicians and two medicines offered. The older physician is the Lord Jesus Christ; His medicine is the Injil. The younger physician is Muhammad-Sahib; and his medicine is the Koran. It is the duty of Musalmans to compare both carefully, with earnest prayer to God to lead them in the "right path."

Musalmans generally believe that the Koran says that the Injil has been corrupted and set aside. This shows that they have not examined what the Koran says about the Injil, but only taken up a bazar saying. If they will study the Koran they will find that it calls the Injil the "Word of God" (الكلمة); that the Koran confirms the Injil; and that it is the duty of all to observe the Injil. This is proved by texts from the Koran, in Arabic as well as English, given in a little book called, *The Witness of the Koran to the Christian Scriptures.*\* Brother, get it and read it carefully; but, above all, read the Injil itself, with prayer to God to lead you in the "right path."

\* Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott, Tract Depôt, Madras. Price 4 Anna. 2 copies post-free for 1 anna.

  
*Short Papers for Muhammadans. No. 2.*

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## WHAT THE KORAN SAYS OF THE INJIL.

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As there is good and bad money, so there are sayings which are true and false. A wise man, before taking money, looks at it, and, if doubtful, tries it by the touchstone. So should we do with what we hear. We should not believe everything, but examine whether it is right or not.

Muslims generally think that the Koran declares the Injil to have been corrupted and abrogated, or altered and set aside. It will now be shown that the Koran says exactly the opposite. By the *Injil* is here understood the whole of the Christian Scriptures, divided into the Taurát, Zabúr, and Injil.

### 1. The Koran declares that the Injil has been given by God.

Sura Sijda, Ayat 23, says that God gave the Taurát to Moses; Sura Beni Israel, Ayat 56, says, "We gave unto David the Zabúr"; Sura Maida, Ayat 10 says, "We gave Jesus the Son of Mary the Injil, containing direction and light."

### 2. The Names given to the Injil in the Koran show the esteem in which it was held by Muhammad Sahib.

The following names are given to it:

In Sura Maida, Ayat 48, "The Book of God"; in Sura Baqr, Ayat 74, "The Word of God"; in Sura Anaám, Ayat 92, "a light and direction to men"; in Sura Sáfát, Ayat 117, "The perspicuous book"; in Sura Anaám, Ayat 154, "a perfect rule", "a direction and mercy".

One name given to the Koran is *Al Furqán*, distinction, as showing the difference between good and evil. The Koran, in Sura Baqr, Ayat 52, gives the same name to the Taurát.

### 3. The Koran says that there is no distinction between it and the Injil.—Sura Shori, Ayat 1, says that God revealed His will to Muhammad Sahib as He did to the prophets before him. Sura Baqr, Ayat 136, says, "We make no distinction" between the Koran, the Taurát, the Zabúr and the Injil.

### 4. The Taurat and Injil are commanded in the Koran to be observed.—Sura Maida, Ayat 72, says, "Ye are not grounded on anything until ye observe the Taurát and Injil."

### THE INJIL HAS NOT BEEN CORRUPTED OR ALTERED.

It is true that Sura Baqr, Ayat 78, accuses some Jews of Medina of copying the Taurát incorrectly, that they might sell it at a small price; but this applied only to a few copies. The Taurát and Injil were in the hands of millions scattered over the Roman and Persian empires; all these copies could not have been corrupted. Besides, nowhere in the Koran are *Christians* accused of corrupting the Scriptures—only the *Jews*. Even among the Jews it was only a few wicked men. Súra Aráf, Ayat 160, says that among the Jews there were some truthful men: would such persons have corrupted the Scriptures?

There are copies of the Injil written more than a hundred years before the birth of Muhammad Sahib, and these copies agree with the present. There were translations four hundred years before the Koran was written, and these also agree with the present Scriptures.

It is true that in copying the Scriptures some slight mistakes have been made, but they do not affect their great doctrines. The Taurát, Zabúr, and Injil have never been corrupted, by Jews or Christians. If they had been corrupted would they have been called in the Koran the ‘Word of God,’ ‘Al Furqán’ &c.? Would Muhammad Sahib have told the people to observe them? Would he not rather have warned them against reading them?

### THE INJIL HAS NOT BEEN ABROGATED OR SET ASIDE.

It is a mistake to think that the Koran abrogates former Scriptures. It says the opposite. In Sura Baqr, Ayat 96, it is written that the Koran confirmed that which was before, and the same is said in Sura Yunas, Ayat 38.

Sura Imran, Ayat 4, says of those who disbelieve the Scriptures that “they shall suffer a grievous punishment.” Sura Mumín, Ayat 73, says that those who charge the Koran and other Scriptures with falsehood shall be burned with fire. Sura Nisa, Ayat 149-151, condemns those who accept the Scriptures only in part.

### DUTY OF MUSLIMS.

It will be seen from the foregoing the high esteem in which the Injil is held in the Koran. Let all Muslims, therefore, read, with care and prayer, what the Koran calls

the “Word of God” *کلام الله* “A light and direction unto men.” *وَهُدٰى وَرَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ*

**NOTE.**—The texts given shortly above will be found in full, both in Arabic and English, in “*The Witness of the Koran to the Christian Scriptures.*” Price 4 Anna. Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott, Tract Dépôt, Madras.

*Short Papers for Muhammadans. No. 3.*

"ASK PARDON FOR THY SINS."

وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ

Where are these words to be found? In the Koran, Sura Mumin, Ayat 57. Who is said to have spoken them? God. To whom were they addressed? To Muhammad Sahib.

In the Koran there are several other texts of the same kind. In Sura Nasr, Ayat 3, it is written, "Praise thy Lord and ask pardon of Him." In Sura Fatah, Ayat 2, it is written, "God may pardon thee thy former and latter sin."

Tradition also represents Muhammad as seeking pardon for sin. In the Mishkát, (x. iii) it is written, "Verily I ask pardon of God and turn from sin towards Him more than seventy times daily." Some of his last words, when dying, were, "Lord, grant me pardon," "Pardon."

If Muslims must confess that even Muhammad was a sinner, much more must they allow that all other men are sinners. Most persons are so wicked that they do not think of their sins. Many regard as sins only those crimes, as theft, murder, &c., which would cause them to be punished by an earthly judge; but God looks at our thoughts and words as well as our actions. The heart is the fountain from which our actions proceed.

The Injil says: "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

To tell whether a garment is clean or dirty, place it in the sun: so we should look at our sins in the dazzling light of God's presence. A holy man of old said of God, "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." Another confessed, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."

All must confess that they have sinned.

**Sin deserves punishment.**—No country could prosper if people could break the laws with impunity: it would soon be full of crime. Much more must the great Lord of the universe punish those who break His righteous laws. From the earliest times and among all nations, it has been felt

that sin deserves punishment. The Koran contains fearful descriptions of the torments that await sinners in hell.

**Supposed good works cannot counterbalance evildeeds.**— Suppose a man is accused of theft before a judge. He replies that he stole only on four days last month, while on 26 days he lived honestly : would this excuse be accepted ? If a man committed only one murder and during the rest of his life did not harm any one, would he be pardoned on this account ? Our sinful actions are countless, and they cannot be atoned for by our supposed good deeds, even the best of which are only like filthy rags. Unless some one intercede for us, we must all go to the place of punishment.

**One sinner cannot intercede for another.**—A man who cannot pay even his own debts cannot pay those of another ; so he who is himself a sinner cannot make atonement for sin. It has been shown that the Koran repeatedly says that Muhammad was a sinner : he cannot therefore intercede for us.

**The Sinless Intercessor.**—A rich man may pay the debt of a poor man ; an innocent man may plead for the guilty. Is a sinless Intercessor to be found ? Yes, blessed be God, who has provided One.

In the Koran six prophets are considered the principal— Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus Christ, and Muhammad. All of them, except Jesus Christ, are described in the Koran to have sinned : Jesus Christ is the only sinless prophet, and therefore the only intercessor.

On account of our sins we deserved to die. Jesus Christ, in His great love to us, offered to suffer in our stead, and died on the cross ; but He rose from the dead on the third day, and afterwards ascended to heaven, where seated, as it were, on the right hand of God, He makes intercession for all who trust in Him as their Saviour. He is the intercessor appointed by God, and however great our sins may be, He can obtain pardon for us.

Brother, when you view your thoughts, words, and actions as in God's sight, you must acknowledge that your sins are countless. A holy man of old said, " Mine iniquities are more than the hairs of mine head : therefore my heart faileth me." Take refuge in the sinless Prophet, seek for pardon through Him alone and not for any of your supposed good deeds. Ask God to give you His Holy Spirit to cleanse your heart and enable you to do His will. Thus will He watch over you through life, the sinless Prophet will be your advocate at the day of judgment, and you will dwell for ever in God's heavenly palace.

النبي المقصوم

## THE SINLESS PROPHET.

The six chief prophets mentioned in the Koran are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. Of these prophets only one was sinless.

Adam ate the forbidden fruit and was driven out of Paradise. Noah sinned through drunkenness. In Sura Noah, Ayat 29, he asks pardon. Abraham was such a good man that he was called the "Friend of God;" Yet he was not sinless. Twice he told lies about his wife. Moses was a great prophet; but on account of his sin he was not allowed to enter the Promised Land. The Koran shows clearly that Muhammad also was not sinless; because, like Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses, he also sought pardon of God. In Sura Mumin, Ayat 57, God says to Muhammad, "Ask pardon for thy sins." The same command is given in Sura Muhammad, 21st Ayat. But neither in the Injil nor the Koran is any fault attributed to Jesus; He is never told to ask pardon for His sins.

Other prophets were called *Khalil-ullah*, "Friend of God," or *Rasul-ullah*, "Apostle of God." Mere men may be so called; but in the Koran Jesus is called *Kalimat-ullah*, the "Word of God," and *Ruh-ullah*, the "Spirit of God."

A man makes himself known by his words; so God makes Himself known to us through Jesus Christ. A good man's word represent himself: as God is pure and sinless, so must be His Word. Jesus is called the "Spirit of God." The spirit of a man is the man himself; Jesus therefore being the Spirit of God must be Himself God, and therefore perfectly sinless. Hence the Koran shows clearly that Jesus, as the Word of God and the Spirit of God, must be far greater than any other prophet.

The Injil, in many places, describes Jesus as holy, harmless, undefiled, without blemish or spot. From birth to death, He was perfectly sinless. He never cast evil eyes upon any woman, spoke any bad word, did any evil deed; This is very wonderful.

Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Muhammad were all sinners, all asked pardon from God, and confessed that if God did not pardon them they would perish. Only Jesus Christ was pure and spotless. Consider then, brother,

or whom will you rely—on a sinner or on the Sinless One ? On the guilty or the guiltless ? Can the man who is fallen into a pit deliver out of it another man who has also fallen into it ? Muhammad confessed that he himself depended only on the mercy of God : by his own merits he could not deliver even himself ; how then can he deliver you ? But Jesus is sinless, and therefore He can deliver from sin those who put their trust in him. He can do this for the following reasons :—

1. *Because Jesus is sinless, He has been able to make atonement for sin.*—As the debtor cannot pay another's debt when he cannot pay his own, so he who is himself a sinner cannot make atonement for sin. But as a kind rich man may pay the debt of the poor, so the sinless Jesus has been able to make atonement for our sins. The punishment which we ought to have borne for sin, He bore in our stead. Therefore, though He was sinless, it was necessary for Him to die upon the cross. Thus, because Jesus is sinless, He has been able to make atonement for our sins. He therefore is the Saviour. Hence the Injil says, “ He bare our sins in his own body on the tree.”

2. *Because Jesus is sinless, He can show us the right path, and can give us strength to walk therein.*—He who is sinless can make no mistake, and will therefore never lead us wrong. The path that He points out is certainly the way to heaven. He can also stretch out His hand to help us on the way. If we follow sinners, we shall be sinners ; but if we lay hold on Him who is sinless, follow Him, become His disciples and obey His commands, we, too, at the end will find ourselves sinless.

3. *Jesus, being sinless, can be our Advocate in the Court of God.*—We must all stand before God to be judged. We are sinners and must confess our guilt. Who then can plead for us ? Can Muhammad be our advocate ? He was himself a sinner ; can one criminal be the advocate of another ? But if Jesus, the Word of God and Spirit of God, plead for us, all will be well. Blessed be God, Jesus is willing to be our Advocate. It is written in the Injil, “ If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father (that is, with God), Jesus Christ the righteous.”

Brother, take refuge in the sinless Jesus. His teaching is found in the Injil ; read it therefore and you will be able to learn about Him. Believe on Him : then you will obtain pardon through the atonement that He has made ; and He will ever be your Advocate with God. He, the Sinless One, will lead you in the right path till death ; He will then make you perfectly sinless, and take you to heaven.

## JESUS CHRIST.

JESUS CHRIST, *Isá Masíh*, was born at Bethlehem in the country of Judea, nearly 1900 years ago. His mother's name was Mary: hence he is called Ibn-Mariam. No man was His father; at His birth Mary was a virgin. The special power of God descended on Mary, and through this Jesus was born. The Koran, Sura Ambiya, 91 Ayat, says: "She who remained a virgin, we put within her our spirit (Ruh); in this way we have made her and her son a sign to all people."

It is written in the Injil that Mary was told by the Angel Gabriel how her son should be born: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke i. 35.

On the night that Jesus was born, some shepherds were watching their flocks. An angel appeared to them and said: "Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy. For unto you is born this day a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." Luke ii. 11.

At the age of thirty years, Jesus began to go about, teaching and working many miracles. Just before doing so, the Spirit of God, like a dove, descended on Him, and a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Matt. iii. 17.

But what do we mean by the word "Son" here? It is not meant that Jesus Christ was the Son of God in the ordinary way. As Musalmans would call such a thought *kufr* (blasphemy), so would Christians. When it is said in the Injil that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the meaning is this. The son is of the same nature as the father: as the son of man is man, so the Son of God is God. As the father exceedingly loves the son, so God the Father loves Jesus Christ with a very special love. As the son of a king is greater than all his subjects, so Jesus was greater than all the prophets. All other prophets were sinners; Jesus was the sinless God.

Jesus healed the sick, cast out devils, gave sight to the blind, made the lame walk, the deaf hear, cleansed lepers, and raised the dead. He also taught many important

truths. We must not rely on mere outward worship, for God looks at the heart. Jesus taught that we ought to love all men, not only those of the true religion. The first and great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart," and the second is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Jesus also said that salvation could be obtained only through Himself. "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." John xiv. 6.

After going about teaching and working miracles for 3½ years, the Jewish priests, who hated Jesus for reproving their sins, caused Him to be put to death. His hands and feet were nailed to a cross, and after suffering great agony for six hours He died.

It may be asked why God allowed a sinless prophet to be put to death? Jesus Christ came to the world to make atonement by His death for the sins of men. When a man is heavily in debt and has nothing to pay, if a rich man has mercy on him and pays his debt for him, the poor debtor obtains release. We all, by our sins, had become, as it were, debtors to God. The wages of sin is death. But the sinless Jesus died in our stead, and made atonement for sin. In consequence of this, those who believe in Him obtain deliverance from their sins.

On the third day Jesus rose from the dead, and after remaining on earth 40 days, went up to heaven.

From this short account the greatness of Jesus Christ can be clearly seen.

His birth was miraculous. His mother was a virgin: He was born by the special power of God. Jesus Christ was sinless. All the other prophets were sinners and prayed to God for the pardon of their sins; but Jesus Christ never sought pardon, for He had never committed sin. By His death Jesus Christ made atonement for the sins of men; no other prophet has been able to do this. Jesus Christ died, but rose again from the dead and will never die again. Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Muhammad are all dead. Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and now sits at the right hand of God, and intercedes with God for all those who believe on Him. No other prophet has been able to do this. Jesus Christ will come again at the last day, and judge all men. No other prophet will do this. Hence, Jesus Christ, in many respects, is greater than all the other prophets.

Brother, take refuge in Jesus Christ: only by Him can salvation be obtained.

## JESUS OR MUHAMMAD? ON WHICH WILL YOU RELY?

Musalmans and Christians agree in many things. Both acknowledge that there is one God, the Creator of all men. Both confess that men are sinful, and need both prophets and books to instruct them. Both acknowledge that by Moses God gave the *Taurat*; by David the *Zabur*; and by Jesus Christ the *Injil*. But Musalmans say that after Jesus Christ Muhammad Sahib came as a prophet; that he is the last and greatest of the prophets. Christians reply that Jesus Christ is the last and greatest of the prophets, and only by Him can salvation be obtained. Let us now compare the two, and let us accept the one whom we find to be the greater.

1. *Compare their Births.*—Muhammad's father was Abdalla and his mother Amina; he was born of his father and mother like other men. It is true that ignorant Musalmans tell wonderful stories about the birth of Muhammad; but intelligent Musalmans know that there is nothing about them in the Koran, and that these tales were invented many years after Muhammad's death.

But the birth of Christ was very wonderful. The Koran acknowledges, (Sura Ambiya, 91st Ayat,) that "God breathed of His Spirit into her who remained a virgin." Thus Jesus was born by the special power of God.

2. *Compare their Characters.*—Muhammad, it is true, was charitable, kind to his friends, and had some other excellent qualities. On the other hand, he engaged in many expeditions to plunder caravans, and took a fifth or more of the spoils; he fought several battles, and ordered hundreds of captives to be put to death. Although he limited his followers to four wives, he claimed that God had given him permission to take more, and he even coveted and married Zeinab, the wife of his adopted son. The Koran distinctly says that Muhammad was a sinner. Sura Mumin, Ayat 57, says, "Ask pardon for thy sins." Sura Nasir, Ayat 3, says, "Praise thy God and seek pardon from Him." In Sura Fatah, Ayat 2, it is written, "May God forgive thee thy former and thy latter sin." From these proofs it is clear that Muhammad was a sinner like other men.

Jesus Christ, on the other hand, never took the property of any one ; never lifted His hand against any one, much less killed any one. He said that He had come, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. His whole life was pure and spotless. The Koran shows that Jesus was sinless. The other prophets mentioned sought pardon from God, and were therefore sinners. But the Koran does not give an account of a single sin of Jesus Christ. In Sura Nisa, Ayat 169, Jesus Christ is called the Word of God (*Kalimat ullah*) and the Spirit of God, (*Ruh ulla*). He must therefore be sinless, while it has been shown that Muhammad was a sinner.

3. *Muhammad worked no Miracles ; Jesus Christ worked many Miracles.*—Musulmans, it is true, say that Muhammad split the moon into two parts and worked several other miracles. These accounts of miracles were written more than a hundred years after Muhammad's death, and are unworthy of belief. In the Koran Muhammad himself clearly states that he never worked a miracle. When unbelievers asked Muhammad to show them a sign, he said (Sura Anqabút, Ayat 49) " Signs are in the power of God alone, and I am no more than a preacher."

4. *Muhammad died and was buried ; Jesus Christ died to make an atonement for sin, but He rose from the dead.*—Muhammad was born like other men ; and died like other men after death. He was buried, and his body went to corruption.

In the Koran there are two accounts of the death of Jesus. In Sura Imrán, Ayat 48, it said that He would die ; but in Sura Nisa, Ayat 156, it is said that He was not killed, but God took Him to Himself. The Injíl plainly says that Jesus died on the cross ; but on the third day He rose from the dead, and afterwards ascended to heaven.

It may be asked, if Jesus was sinless, why did he die ? Jesus, the sinless One, took our sins upon Himself, and made an atonement for us, and this is the reason why He died.

Musalmán brother, consider which can give us true salvation—Muhammad or Jesus ? Muhammad was born in the ordinary way ; Jesus by the power of God. Muhammad confessed himself a sinner ; Jesus was sinless. Muhammad wrought no miracles, but Jesus did many wonderful works. Lastly Muhammad is dead, his body has turned to dust ; but though Jesus once died, He has ascended to heaven, and ever lives to intercede for His people. Brother, take refuge in Jesus Christ. Put your trust in Him ; know Him as the only Saviour. You will then obtain deliverance from sin, and will certainly go to heaven.

## "OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN."

Among the many names of God, one of the sweetest is that of "Father." It expresses both the love and the reverence with which we should regard Him. Jesus Christ teaches us to address Him in prayer as, "Our Father in Heaven."

An earthly father is the means of giving birth to his children; but he is only like the instrument. It is God who gave us life, who keeps us in life; He is our true Father.

An earthly father supports and watches over his children; but all that he gives has been received from God. We live upon God's earth; it is His sun that shines upon us; every thing we have is His gift.

What is the duty of a child to a father? He should love him; he should delight to be near him; he should obey him cheerfully; he should honour him, and try to please him in all things.

Have we thus acted towards our heavenly Father? Alas, no. We have been disobedient, rebellious children, caring only to please ourselves. As such we deserve to be shut out for ever from His holy presence; but He yearns over us with a father's love, and earnestly invites us to return to Him. Jesus Christ taught this by the beautiful parable of the Prodigal Son, which is as follows.

A son asked from his father the portion of goods that fell to him. As soon as he had received it, he went to a far country, where he soon spent all that he had among wicked companions. He was so poor that he was sent to keep swine, and so hungry, that he would gladly have filled his belly with some of the food that the swine did eat. Afterwards he thought that while he was starving, his father's servants had bread enough and to spare. Then he said to himself, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." As soon as his father saw him coming, he ran, fell on his neck, and kissed him. Then the father said to his servants, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet." He

also ordered them to make ready the daintiest food. Full of joy he said, "This my son was dead and is alive again ; he was lost and is found."

This parable is a faint emblem of God's willingness to receive repentant sinners.

But God is our King as well as our Father. A father may forgive his repentant children, but a king cannot pardon criminals simply because they are sorry. If a debtor cannot pay what he owes, he is liable to be sent to prison ; but if a kind rich man pays it for him, he is set free. Jesus Christ willingly agreed to die on the cross for the sins of men, and pardon is now freely offered to all who take refuge in Him and seek forgiveness in His name.

Brother, have you not been disobedient to your heavenly Father and King ? Have you loved Him as a father and honoured Him as a king ? Have you not rather often forgotten Him and broken His laws ? How many lies have you told, how many filthy, angry words have you spoken ; how often have you quarrelled with others ; how many envious, lustful thoughts have you had in your mind ! A holy man of old, when he thought of his sins, said that they were more than the hairs of his head.

When we stand before God to be judged at the last day, we need an advocate to plead for us, or we must perish. Who can be our advocate ? Can Muhammad do so ? Can one criminal intercede for another ? In Sura Mumin, 57 Ayat, it is said to Muhammad, "Ask pardon for thy sins." We need a sinless advocate, and such is the Lord Jesus Christ. Now receive Him as your Saviour, trust in Him alone for salvation, and not to any supposed good works of your own. Confess your sins to God, and seek pardon in the name of Jesus. Ask God also to give you His Holy Spirit to purify your heart and enable you to do His will.

Repentant children are drawn far more closely to God than those who are merely His children by creation. They are His redeemed children ; Jesus Christ is their elder brother. What will God do for you, if you are one of them ? You will have a father's eye to watch over you ; a father's ear to listen to your prayers, and a father's home to receive you at last. Oh the happiness of having God for a Father !

The Bible says, "Have we not all one Father ? Hath not one God created us ?" Such being the case, we are all like brothers and sisters of the same family, and should love each other. How often have we acted otherwise ! Let us seek, with God's help, to be more loving in future.

## THE TRUE WAY TO HEAVEN.

Hindus often say that the religions of the world are different roads leading to the same city. Musalmans and Christians do not believe this. As well might it be said to a railway traveller, "Take any train : all lead to the same city."

Although Musalmans and Christians agree that there is only one true way to heaven, they differ as to which is the true way. Let us consider first the ways pointed out in the Koran.

Sura Muhammad says that all who die in battle fighting for Islam go to Paradise, while cowards will be sent to hell. Consideration will show that this cannot be the true way. A man killed in battle may have been a thief, adulterer, murderer : will such a man go to heaven merely on account of his death? Neither does a man deserve to be sent to hell merely because he is afraid in battle and runs away. Muhammad was engaged in many wars, and said this to encourage his soldiers to fight to the death.

But Musalmans generally hope to go to heaven on account of their belief in Muhammad, their prayers, alms-giving, fasting, and other religious observances. They believe that their good and bad actions will be weighed, in a balance and those whose good deeds outweigh the bad will go to Paradise.

To this it is replied, that our bad actions immeasurably outweigh our supposed good deeds. Most men regard as sins only these outward actions which all consider wrong ; but God, who is infinitely holy, looks also at the heart, from which outward actions proceed. Jesus Christ, Isa Masih, says in the Injil, that "whoso looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." Who can reckon up the proud, angry, envious, covetous, lustful thoughts that have passed through his mind! How many angry words have we spoken? how many lies have we told! How often have we forgotten God ; taken His name in vain, and otherwise disobeyed His command !

The holiest men feel most their own sinfulness ; they acknowledge that their best actions are mixed with sin and are like filthy rags ; that clothed in them they cannot stand in the dazzling light of God's presence.

But even granting that our good actions are perfectly good, they cannot atone for our evil deeds. Suppose a criminal says that during 26 days in a month he neither stole nor did harm to any one ; would that make up for his misconduct on the other days ! The law demands perfect obedience, and even for one murder during a long life, the punishment is death.

Musalmans, however, may say that Muhammad will intercede for them. The reply to this is, that one criminal cannot intercede for another. In the Koran it is repeatedly said that Muhammad was a sinner. In Sura Mumin, 57 Ayat, it is said, " Ask pardon for thy sin."

From all this it is plain that we cannot be saved by our own good works. It is like a man, with only a few aunas, trying to pay a debt of many thousands of rupees. The only way is for a kind rich man to pay it for him. Somewhat in this manner, God, knowing that we could not be saved by our own good works, has graciously provided a way of salvation.

Isa Masih, called in the Koran the "Word of God," (*Kalimat-ullah*), and the 'Spirit of God,' (*Ruh-ullah*), agreed to become man, and die on the cross in the room of sinful men. He thus, as it were, became our surety, and bore the punishment of death due to our sins. He also perfectly obeyed all God's law, and, as it were, prepared a spotless robe of righteousness for His followers. Isa Masih offers to take upon Him all the sins of those who take refuge in Him, and to give them His robe of righteousness. When, at the last day, those who believe in Him have to plead guilty, the Sinless Prophet will intercede for them ; when they confess that they have no merits of their own deserving heaven as a reward, Isa Masih secures it for them by His spotless righteousness.

But will all who call themselves Christians be saved ? Certainly not. Isa Masih will say to many such, " I never knew you ; depart from me ye workers of iniquity." He will acknowledge only such as obey His commands, who follow His holy example. Brother, giving up all hope of being saved by your own merits, take refuge in Isa Masih, and ask God, for His sake, to give you His Holy Spirit to enable you to overcome every sin, and be adorned with every virtue. Thus shall you be happy here and hereafter : this is the true and only way to heaven.



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